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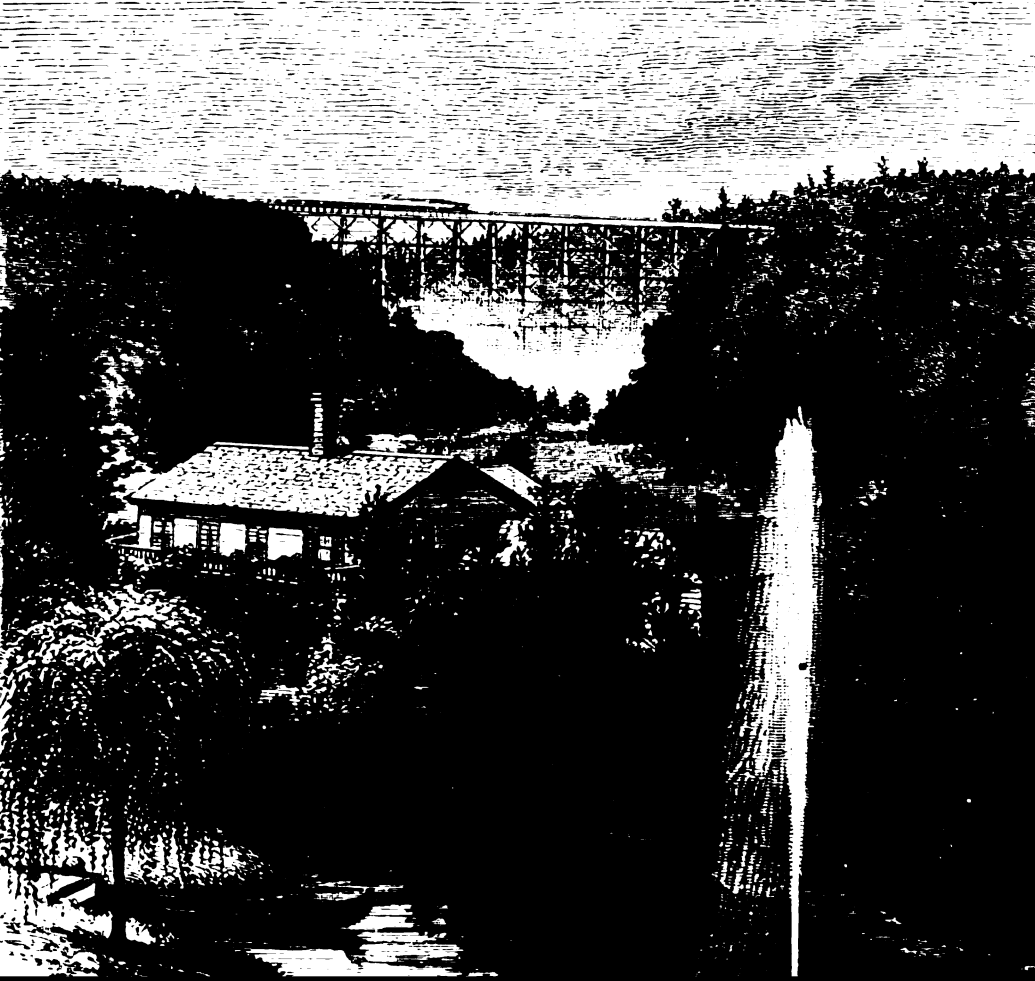

Voices of the glen

Henry Raymond Howland, John Henry Ellsworth Whitney

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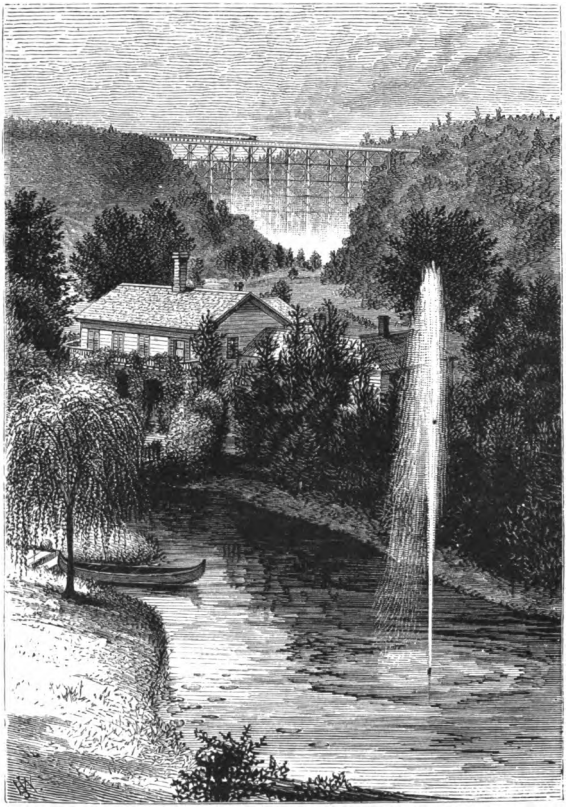

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VOICES OF THE GLEN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY E. J. WHITNEY.

"The sylvan pomp of woods, the golden sun,
The flowers, the leaves, the river on its way,
Blue skies, and silver clouds, and gentle winds."

NEW-YORK:
1876.

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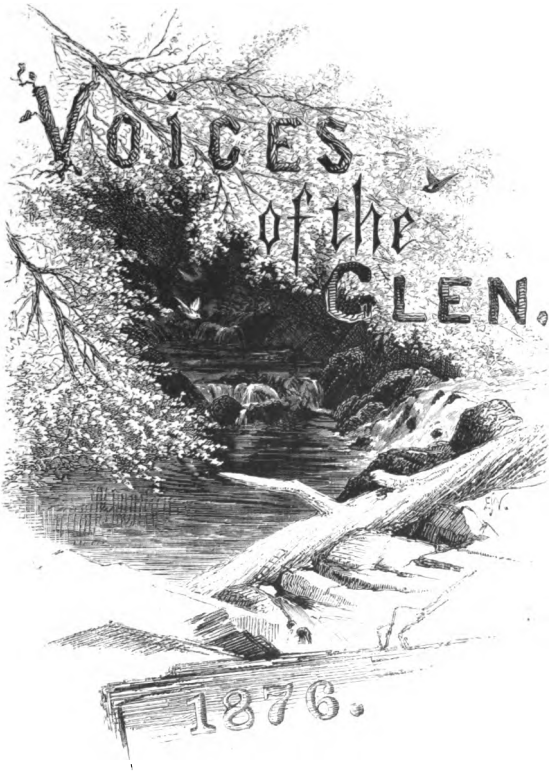

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A MEMORY.

BRIGHT summer dream of white cascade,
Of lake, and wood, and river!
The vision from the eye may fade,—
The heart keeps it forever.
There beauty dwells
In rarest dells,—

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There every leaf rejoices;
By cliff and steep,
By crag and deep,
You hear their pleasant voices.

From forest flower and meadow bloom,
The soft wind, passing over,
Brings the wild roses' fresh perfume,
The sweet breath of the clover;
And odors rare,
Pulse through the air,
In waves of pleasure flowing,—
We dream away
The passing day,
Regardless of its going.

The sunlight gleams through leafy boughs,
The skies are blue above us,
The happy laugh that comes and goes
Is from the friends that love us.
Oh! bliss combined
Of sense and mind,
Rare boon to mortals given!
Before our eyes
Is Paradise,
Above the blue is heaven.

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Take, Memory, to thy choicest shrine,
And guard as sacred treasure,
The hours of ecstasy divine,
The days of untold pleasure:
Though many a scene
May come between,
In way of future duty,
We still shall deem
Our summer dream,
As queenly in its beauty.

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GLEN IRIS.

WEET sylvan solitude! thy genius came!
Long ages waited for the tryst to be;
And in a poet's dream of ecstasy,
All smiles and tears, he spake thy fond new name
GLEN IRIS! and the voice of mountain rills
With low, melodious thunder woke the hills
In answering echo; and the swaying vines
Made leafy canopies, fair forest shrines
For silent worship. Fairy troops of ferns
Bent in a mute obeisance as they passed
Where velvet mosses had their mantles cast,
Leading the way to nectar-brimming urns;
And over all the softly veiling mist,
Now rose, now changing pearl and lovely amethyst!

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FALLS OF GLEN IRIS.

THEY call to me, like church bells wandering down
The mornings of our childhood, and we stand
Upon the gray rocks as we did that day,
Whose gold and purple hours were gathered up
As though God crowned and sent them, His high priests,
In Autumn's crimson ephods; and we heard,
'Mid grand inaugurals of earth and sky,
The waters speak to us!

Oh, temple vast!
Hewn from black quarries of the waves o'erhead,
And lifting up, in wondrous majesty,
Thy white face to the sky, no poet e'er
Hath woven the fair garment of his song
About thy waters!

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Thou hast stood with God!
And through the centuries thy mighty voice
Hath shook the forest's heart, the Summer suns
Have set thee with their golden arabesques,
And the rocks frayed thy threshold, while thy psalm,
'Mid waves of silver incense, hath rolled up,
Oh, white cathedral, to the throne of God!

Falls of Glen Iris! let the green hills stand
In solemn witness 'round thee! let the Spring
Fringe the white mantle of thy waves with light,
And the stars write thine idyls!

Thou dost wear
God's ordination on thy shining brow,
Of priest and poet! and He speaks through thee,
The child of his anointing!

So we heard,
Silent and worshipful, that Autumn morn,
Gathered about thine altars, what God said,
Who, on the waves, came down and talked with us!

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THE HOME OF THE RAINBOW.

HERE centuries since, with its tremor of wonder,
The earthquake awoke from its prisoning grave,
While heaved the old world, from the fires rocking under,
And mountains were rent for the path of the wave;—
Where the terrible cliffs are still scarred with the thunder
That laid the brown ribs of earth's skeleton bare,
While the waters raved past, when the rocks swept in sunder—
Glen Iris, the home of the rainbow, is there.

Where the bald eagle paused, long ago, in his soaring
To scream o'er the mists from the chasms below:
Where the red savage turned from the cataract's roaring,
And bore past the Portage his birchen canoe;

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Where scores of cascades to the sunlight are flashing,
To kiss the dark torrent, or waste in the air;
Where the waves through wild gorges foam, shrieking and dashing—
Glen Iris, the home of the rainbow, is there.

Where the lawns hold their green from the cataract's flowing;
Where the orchard's rich fruitage bends low from the tree;
Where the home-roof is broad, and the hearth-fires are glowing,
And the noble host's welcome is hearty and free;
Where genius and wit, with their logic and laughter,
Still draw 'round the board, its rare bounties to share,—
Forgetting what sorrow or toil may come after;—
Glen Iris, the home of the rainbow, is there.

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GLEN IRIS.

Written for a social and literary gathering at Glen Iris, 1860.

LIKE a parting in the shadows—
Like a rift of light at sea—
Like young Spring across the meadows,
Comes this morning back to me.

Like a bridge across the toiling,
Has its memories ever been!
And sad thoughts have gathered sweetness
From this day to revel in.

One by one the hours have hurried,
With their weight of care and pain,
On to meet this golden dawning,
As the sunshine follows rain.

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Glen Iris wears its drops baptismal
On a holier brow to-day!
And each tree to each is calling
In a whisper, "Let us pray."

We have felt thy tender touching,
Friendship's subtle alchemist!
Hands are clasped that long were parted,
Eyes grow dim with teary mist.

What if summer passed too quickly,
Trailing blossoms wan and sere,
We 've the same grand choir of waters
Singing to another year!

Changeless are its rhythmed voicings,
And our hearts beat now, as then,
To its cadenced benedictions,
Answering back its sweet amen!

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POEM.

A Fragment.

NE other scene is there, of fairer life,
And as we look, sweet peace inwreathes the soul,
And, faintly, as the distant hum of bees,
Returning, heavy-laden, to their home,
A gentle murmur melts on Memory's ear.
Oh! fairy-like was life in those bright days
We dreamed away, soothed by the Genesee.
Our hearts expanded in that pure, free air;
We seemed to live a calm, ideal life,
In an ideal world. Earth has fair spots—
Lost fragments of primeval Paradise.
O loved Glen Iris! visions of thy joys
Will linger in these vast and wondrous halls
Long after Recollection's searching eyes
Are dimmed and failing in a ripened age.

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BEAUTIFUL GLEN IRIS.

FAREWELL to Glen Iris, that bright spot which seems
Like a vision of Paradise still in our dreams:
A gate-way the angels half open have left
To show us a glimpse of what man was bereft;
O sadly from all thy fair scenes do I part,
And grief sighs this strain o'er the chords of my heart—
"Glen Iris no more, Glen Iris no more,"
We all at Glen Iris shall meet nevermore!

When Autumn's weird music was borne on the breeze
And each tint of the rainbow was caught by the trees,
Though the storm raged without and the clouds gathered dim,
Within was glad pleasure's cup filled to the brim;
To music and laughter re-echoed the Hall,
And the smile of our host shed a light over all;
Now the Autumn wind moaneth, "Glen Iris no more,"
We all at Glen Iris shall meet nevermore!

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Yet often the slumber of midnight beguiling,
A golden-haired angel upon me is smiling—
'T is hope, the bright spirit; her wand she doth raise,
And pictures the friends of those halcyon days:
I wander again through those Eden-like glades;
We gaze with delight on the sparkling cascades,
Then softly she whispers, "Glen Iris once more,"
We all shall return to Glen Iris once more!

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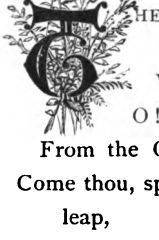
THERE 'S A BEAUTIFUL SPOT BY THE WILD GENESEE.



HERE 's a beautiful spot by the wild Genesee,
Where blend the sublime and romantic;
O! there is not a scene so lovely, I ween,
From the Oregon to the Atlantic:
Come thou, sprite of the deep where the white waters leap,
Whose office to aid and inspire is,
That we picture the green, the shadow and sheen,
Of the landscape surrounding Glen Iris: —

Show the fields on the uplands all golden with grain,
The orchards with fruit overladen;
The green forest trees as they sway in the breeze—
Which is pure as the incense of Eden,—
And the river below, passing on in its flow,
Now calm as the sunlight that flushes,
Now into the verge of the fathomless gorge
A silvery torrent it rushes:

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Here the cliffs' dizzy heights in their fearfulness hang,
Where the birds in their aeries are dwelling,
There, down the abyss the weird waters hiss,
Or over the ledges are swelling;
And the caverns yawn wide on the precipice side,
Where never a sunbeam was slanted;
O! we gaze upon all, river, landscape, and fall,
Till the heart and the eye are enchanted.

The spell must be broken: dear valley, farewell!
Farewell, too, thou wild-flowing river!
But a life-happy thought of the joy that you brought,
Will be a glad presence forever.
And should the days come, ere journeying home,
When the heart's wish from care to retire is,
Heaven send it may be by the dear Genesee,
And the waters and woods of Glen Iris.

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GLEN IRIS, O GLEN IRIS!

LEN IRIS, O Glen Iris!
Thou happy, happy spot!
The world may will and suffer,
Thy quiet knows it not.

No breath of sorrow comes to thee,
No tears, no dream of pain—
Only the sweet, sweet summer-time,
The waters' sweet refrain.

Though other lands upon my sight
May dawn with beauty rare,
No scenes can ever break the spell
That holds my memory there.

Though life may lose its brightness,
And age may dim my sight,
If thoughts of thee but come to me,
All griefs must take their flight.

Oh, lovely, lovely valley!
No words of mine can tell
The thoughts that nestle in my heart;
All language fails—Farewell!

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DEH-GA-YA-SOH

CREEPING adown the gray old wall,
Comes Deh-ga-ya-soh, the waterfall.

Looking through twilight to catch the sight,
We see the shimmer of raiment white.

The moonshine lies on her silver hair,
It crowns with brightness her brow so rare;

While silently down the mossy wall,
She creeps like a phantom waterfall.

As low she leaps to the starlit glen,
Her beauty steals to my feet again;

And I reach my hand as she hurries by
Where the leaves and the purple flowerets lie.

I reach my hand for the maiden's kiss,
Ere she wanders away through the deep abyss.

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A plash of water o'er ragged stone,
And I am left in the dark alone.

But ever she comes, and ever she goes,
And over the spot her magic throws,

Till a nameless mystery wraps the shade,
Where naught but the leaves and waters played;

And a mystical chant thrills all the air,
As we linger and list to the voices there;

And we see a spirit in saintly white,
Where Deh-ga-ya-soh falls down in light.

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TO GLEN IRIS.

[IMPROMPTU.]

O THEE, sweetest valley! Glen Iris, to thee!
More fair than the vision of poet may be,
And beyond what the artist may dream, when his eyes
Are dim with the hues of the loveliest skies;
To thee and thy forest, whose foliage forever
Is fresh with the mists of thy light-flashing river;
Thy flowers that are swayed in the softest of airs;
Thy birds in the greenest and deepest of lairs;
Thy lights and thy shadows, thy sweet river's fall
That sings into slumber or reverie, all:
To thee, though our lips cannot utter a word,
Our spirits are singing in rapture unheard;
For 't is part of thy magic—thy beauty-wrought spell—
What thou whisperest to us we never can tell,

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Sweet Glen of the Rainbow, to thee there are given,
As fresh as the day when they sprang into birth,
All the joys and the graces we love most of earth,
And the sunlight flings o'er thee the glories of heaven.
So the Nameless now drink from thy pleasure-brimmed chalice,
And pledge thee the rainbow-ideal of valleys —
A Beulah where thrice happy mortals that see thee,
Forget all their care, for thy waters are Lethe,
And we shout and rejoice that thou art what thou art—
The beautiful home of a beautiful heart.

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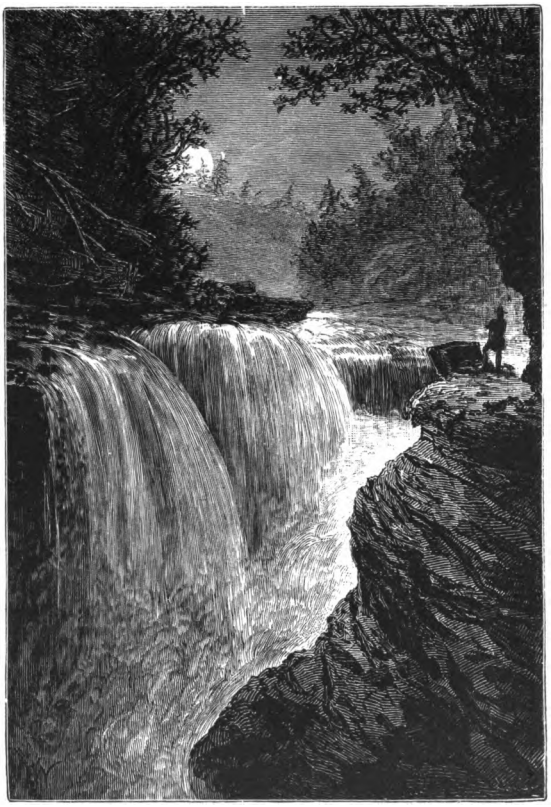

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THE LOWER FALLS OF THE UPPER GENESEE AT MIDNIGHT.

DOWN amid the gorge's darkness,
Where the writhing waters pour,
Down a thousand feet of shadow,
On their battle-shaken shore;
Where the spectral midnight stillness
Struggles with their lion roar;

From the jaws of every chasm,
From the crest of every steep,
On the dim and claw-like branches,
Shadows glide, and flit, and leap;
And in dark-lipped, narrow caverns,
Gloomy phantoms crouch and creep.

Phantoms of the distant church-yard,
Buried forms of long ago,
Shapes of innocence and beauty,
Forms deformed, and shapes of woe,
Move in solemn, sad procession,
To and fro, to and fro.

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And an angel form is floating,
  Shrouded in a "robe of white;"
And an angel face is gazing
  Through the dreamy phosphor-light;
And a low, sad voice is calling
  Through the bleak and lonely night.

Nearer, nearer, floats the vision—
  It is close above me now;
Sadder still its heavenly beauty,
  Softer still its voice's flow;
I can feel its presence 'round me,
  And its breath upon my brow.

I can feel the olden pressure
  Of her maidenly embrace,
And the olden, velvet rustle
  Of her cheek against my face;
And her bosom's dove-like beating,
  As she nestles in her place.

Closer, closer, nestle closer,
  Spirit Agnes, to my breast!
Thou and I are one forever,

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Here forever shalt thou rest;
On no other heart empillowed—
By no other arms impressed.

But I clasp a ghostly fancy—
Naught but mist and darkness here!
Yet I felt her loving kisses,
And I saw the streaming tear
That she wept for me at parting,
Ere she slumbered on her bier.

And I seemed to hear her calling,
And I seem to hear her still,
As she called to me at evening,
Standing by the ruined mill,
When I waved my farewell blessing
From the sunset-tinted hill.

But the dream is flown! around me
All is desolate and bare;
And the Falls' deep rumbling echoes
Wail along their gloomy lair;
And the Autumn's tears are falling
Through the damp and dreary air.

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TABLE ROCK.

Lower Falls of the Genesee.

It cometh with its maddened rush
The fierce and foaming tide,
As bounds the war-horse in the flush
Of victory and pride;
Cometh, cometh
To leap the mountain-side.

And yet, the fearless stream was nursed
In silent glen and glade,
And softly tried its strength when first
It left the sylvan shade;
Softly, softly
It leaped the bright cascade.

It glided round the forest hill
To kiss the bending flower,
And murmured to the dancing rill
That left its shady bower;
Murmured, murmured
Of future pride and power.

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Then on and on it swiftly sped,
Till, from the trembling shore,
The drooping blossom bent its head,
But kissed the wave no more;
Drooping, drooping
To hear its hollow roar.

And now, the fearful cliff and crag
O'erhang with threatening face,
And wildly, madly, down they drag
The torrent to their place;
Wildly, wildly
It struggles in the chase.

They press its sides, it sways and moans,
So fearful is the shock,
But plunging on, it proudly foams
Their iron grasp to mock;
Plunging, plunging
It vaults o'er Table Rock.

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NIGHT AT THE LOWER FALLS.

IS meet at morn and eve,
To bend the knee in act of humble worship,
And I illude to-night my wandering fancy
Till it doth seem a song of praise my spirit pays
Within a wondrous temple.

I stand upon a rocky floor
From the bold cliff jutting midway;
No storied windows pierce these massive walls,
That shut me in from all the noisy world;
Lamps of heaven swing from the lofty dome,
Revealing dim recess and cloistered aisle.

Frescoes, and sculptures too, are here;
Varied and rare, for every line and curve
Is by that wise and wondrous master-hand,
Who pencils with the fretting wave;
Whose chisel is the storms of ages.

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And there is grand cathedral music!
From its high place the torrent thunders down
Its organ tones, and, rushing o'er its bed,
Hymns forth a mighty chorus;
I bow and shrink to nothingness
Amid the awful grandeur of the place;
Truly God is here!

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THE GENESEE.

'N the clasp of corn-clad meadows,
'Neath the hum of bird and bee;
'Midst the forest's visioned shadows,
Rolls the gentle Genesee.

Folding many a home in beauty;
Dealing out unceasingly
Monarch's power, or helot's duty,
Flows the lovely Genesee.

Hemmed by cliffs, and lashed to surges,
Where the crags hang fearfully,
Down through blackened chasms and gorges,
Writhes the tortured Genesee.

Holding there the mountains mirrored,
Tossed in mists, or wreathed in spray,
With the rainbow on its forehead
Rolls the rock-bound Genesee.

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AUTUMN AT GLEN IRIS.

GLORIOUS hours of purple and bloom!
O wondrous hours of gorgeous gloom!
When over the hill-crowns in glowing device,
The fingers of angels from far Paradise
Are frescoing over the pallid and old,
With tropical tintings of purple and gold;
And vanishing hues of the summery days,
Like phantoms, come back through the soft dreamy haze.

•

The white lips of lilies gleam not on the streams,
The perfume of roses floats not in my dreams,
The cadence of wild birds is stilled on the steep,
The daisy's sweet eyelids are folded in sleep,
And drowsily, brooks, in their shadowy beds,
Lie lazily winding their silvery threads,
And wordless the songs they are singing to me,
But sweet as a seraph's glad prophecy.

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The harvest is gathered; the reapers at rest,
Are watching the rifts in the mystical west:
And see, where the drapery 's softly uncurled,
There glow the white gates of the beautiful world—
Where, after life's blightings and toilings and tears,
As sweet as the summer that comes to the years,
In fragrance shall blossom, in music shall roll,
A summer, glad summer, once more to the soul.

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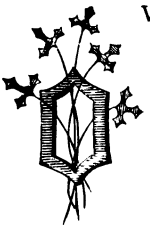

VACATION DAYS.

FAIR Glen Iris, to thy wild retreat,
Thy simple joys, thy recollections sweet.
As sadly homeward we are swept along,
Dear Glen! to thee we dedicate our song.

Thy laughing Falls are ringing in our ears,
Thy foaming water to our sight appears,
Our hearts they echo forth a sad refrain
Of happy times that ne'er may come again.

Thy lake and river, fountain, lawn and shade,
Are pleasant memories that will never fade;
Thy home a spot where mirth and kindness
dwell;
To scenes so dear 't is hard to say farewell.

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GOOD NIGHT TO GLEN IRIS.

ALL of Glen Iris, joyous and bright,
Clear, laughing water—a long, sad
good-night!
Thy rocky harps with invisible strings,
Angels at nightfall sweep with their wings,
Awaking such heavenly music, we fain
Would tarry forever and list to the strain.
No Lethean stream was ever more sweet,
No water so soothing to tired, weary feet.
But we must return to the world again—
To its endless round of pleasure and pain;
Yet in our hearts we shall carry away
Beauty to gladden for many a day.
Time, glorious river, may change thy fall—
Never the picture on memory's wall.
Glen Iris, good-night! 'T was time, I know,
To have whispered these sad words long ago;
Thy witching shades o'er me dreamily creep,
Mine eyelids are heavy, though not with sleep,
And dim grows the page on which I write—
For the last time—Glen Iris, good night!

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SALUTATION OF CLASS '74, HOWLAND SCHOOL.

HAIL to thee! hail to thee, lovely Glen Iris!
To each wild-flowing torrent and quiet retreat;
We hail thy glad home with its charms and its treasures,
And all thy surroundings, dear valley, we greet.

The happiest moments of youth's fleeting hours,
We have passed in the peace of thy sheltering walls,
In thy Council-House olden, thy deep hidden bowers,
By thy green trailing vines and thy beautiful Falls.

And when we depart from thy friendly protection,
Fond memory shall treasure the joys of the Glen;
Our thoughts shall return with grateful affection,
To live those bright days by the river again.

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ARBUTUS.

LOVE brought me these blooms from a
far-off wild—
Beautiful blooms which the forest
kept—
Spring's eldest fancies which wakened and smiled,
Softly and purely, while other buds slept.

They are haunting my thoughts with their tender
eyes,
And conjure ghosts in the twilight dim,
From the long-ago, that country which lies
Haloed about with a rainbow rim.

And the "might have been," and all we had dreamed
As we parted leaves that last year fell,
And gathered the blossoms that blushed and beamed
With spring's sly kisses, and south-wind's spell—

Comes back with this perfume of amber and musk,
And memory sits in its radiant white,
Gleaming and piercing the gathering dusk
Of this sadder time—this lone to-night.

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And deftly her shuttle speeds in and out,
A weaving together, shred by shred,
The web of my life, and all that has been—
Broidering faces now changed or dead.

A sconce with this fragrance swings back and forth,
With deathly glow in the evening gloom,
And Gobelin tapestries, not of earth,
Are slowly growing from out her loom.

A prophecy glows on its hidden side,
In arbutus leaves and lily-bells white,
And I know that they mean, whatever betide,
No sadder day cometh than closeth to-night.

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GLEN IRIS.

HERE the seven-hued arch spans the beautiful river,
By spray-shadowed phantoms up-raised;
Where the waves on the brink of the precipice quiver,
Shrink backward, affrighted, amazed,—
Delay for a moment the mad plunge before them,
Then leap into song 'neath the bow bending o'er them;—

There, afar from the clamor of town, and the shadow
That rests under smoke-tainted skies,
In the lap of green hills, mapped with forest and meadow,
Glen Iris, the beautiful, lies:
A lawn, a cool wood, a clear lake and a fountain,
The wild stream before, and behind, the low mountain.

There earliest spring gives her full breast to nature,
And buds break in bountiful bloom;

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The trees on the hills crown with sweets their full stature
And load the moist air with perfume;
Like a maiden new risen to meet her adorning,
The valley is fresh with the incense of morning.

There music is born of the wind-shaken willows
That fringe the lake's margin around;
It floats from the Genesee's miniature billows,
And rises, low-voiced, from the ground;
In the full tide of life all the fair glen rejoices,
And valley and stream blend their rhythmical voices.

Oh, the charm of the spell of that beautiful valley!
Oh, siren-like song of its fall!
We would fain in life's voyage there linger and dally
Amid the bright scenes of its thrall;
'Mid carols of birds and rare odors of flowers,
Days lapse into moments and moments hold hours.

When the days shall be told and the moments all reckoned
That life has held bitter or sweet;
When the timorous soul to the unknown is beckoned,
And faith and reality meet,
E'en death would be sweet by the murmuring river,
And rest, 'neath the sign of the Promise, forever.

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MONA-SHA-SHA.

A Legend of the Upper Falls.

O, TOURIST, where the Genesee
Takes rise among the southern hills,
And, swollen by a thousand rills,
Flows on at last unclogged and free!
Rocks vainly piled to bar his way
Look dim through clouds of mountain spray,
And over ragged, flinty stairs
The silvery feet of his waves trip down,
And beetling cliffs above him frown;
But little the restless rover cares.
Turrets tremble with pealing bells,
Joy loudly winds his bugle horn,
And the heart of a nation proudly swells
When an heir to royalty is born.

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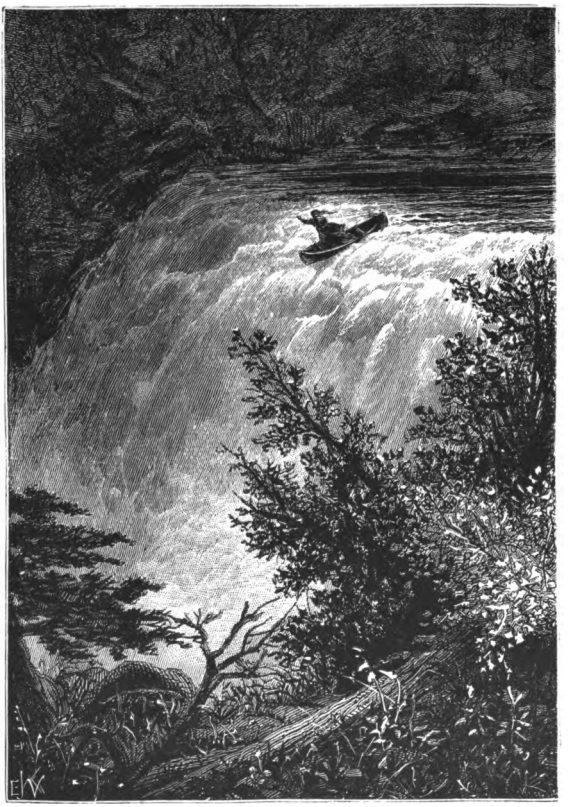

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But greeted by a strain more wild,
Leaps from its fount the mountain child,
  Old piney groves a mellow roar
Commingled with the panther's scream–
  Murmur of torrents, and the cry
  Of the gray eagle circling high;
Meet welcome for a stream
  That dashes down, in youthful force,
  From the green hills to run its course.

Go, tourist, where the Genesee
  In falling shakes the solid land!
Calm Avon, Teviot and Dee
  Roll not through scenes more truly grand:
When fearful cataracts are passed,
  Still voluble with Indian lore,
A sunless channel gained at last
  Walled in by rock on either shore,
The river, with impetuous flow,
Hurries to great Ontario.

A legend of the past will cling
  To these romantic falls forever,
And Time unfolds his cloudy wing
  To hide it with a vain endeavor:

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When came the moon, to hunter dear,
Joninedah built his cabin near
Their boiling rapids, white with foam,
And brought with him a wife and child
To gladden, in the dreary wild,
His temporary home.
The region round was full of game,
But back each night Joninedah came
With empty hands, though bow more true
No marksman of the nation drew.
In vain some olden forest lay
Light-hearted Mona-sha-sha sung,
In low, sweet tones, to drive away
The cloud upon his spirit flung:
Then, while her infant boy she tossed
To win a look of love from him,
In soothing accents would accost
The hunter weak and worn of limb—
"Cheer up! and break your lengthened fast,
Success will crown your toil at last;
Fish in the river I have caught,
And wild fruit from the forest brought,
And golden comb of hiving bee
Have found within the hollow tree."
"On me keeps watch an evil eye,"
Would he, desponding, make reply.

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"In swamps I cannot enter, hide
At my approach the fallow deer;
Bad spirits turn my shaft aside
And gibber curses in my ear;
Duck, pigeon, and the partridge shy,
Admonished of my coming, fly;
The fox scents danger in the breeze,
And to a closer covert flees;
The wolf a mystic signal heeds,
Then to a place of safety speeds,
And timely warning to the bear
Is wafted by the whispering air.
When near the grazing elk, my tread
Is lighter than the falling dew,
But the scared creature lifts its head,
Looks 'round, and vanishes from view.
Bad spirits are abroad to harm,
They rob of strength the hunter's arm,
And curtain with a mist his sight
Though nature laughs in noonday light."
Faint from a long, fatiguing tramp,
One night returned he to his camp;
Of no avail were arts employed
By the fond wife to make a thought
Of brighter hours—and unenjoyed,
Untasted, was the meal she brought.

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Within her trembling heart at length,
By anguish riven, was created
A dark suspicion that the strength
Of his affection had abated.
Vexed that her most endearing phrase
Brought back no sunshine to his gaze,
Young Mona-sha-sha changed her tone—
"Why fall my words on ear more cold
Than the deaf adder's house of stone?
It was not so of old."

With moody brow and temper soured.
By disappointment overpowered,
The chief responded—"I have heard
The chirrup of a silly bird;
As well when howls the midnight storm
Look for a gleam of sunshine warm—
For blossoms hunt to grace thy hair
When snows descend, and woods are bare—
As idly hope to drive away
The powers of darkness from their prey.
There was a time with joy replete,
When Mona-sha-sha's voice was sweet,
And not one cloud a shadow cast.
But joy is dead—that time is passed!"

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Without betrayal of her wo
By tear-drop, or convulsive start,
The wife had listened, while the flow
Of bitter waters drenched her heart.

On fells of wolves and otter brown
Soon the tired hunter laid him down,
And near young Mona-sha-sha kept
Keen, silent watch until he slept;
Then lashed the boy upon her back,
And darted from the cabin door,
Around a dark and dangerous track,
Conducting to the rocky shore
Above the Falls, that filled with sound
The gray, columnar woods around.
When reached the water-side she drew
From cover dark a light canoe
And launched it on the tide
That foamed and thundered, while her boy
Clapped his little hands in joy,
By moonlight thus to glide.
With skillful hand the bark she steered
Until the cataract she heard;
Then threw away her paddle light
And, hurried on by rapids white

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Like shaft of springing bow,
The wailing mother and her child
A tomb walled in by rocks up-piled,
Found in the depth below.

Joninedah* from a troubled dream,
When morning dawned, in terror broke:
No eyes of love on him did beam—
No voice of honeyed cadence spoke;
And he was gone—that prattler gay,
From whose endearing wile he turned—
Of arts demoniac the prey—
In moody discontent away,
As if the tie of blood he spurned.
Unhappy man! one ember still,
Though deep the gloom around him thrown,
Unquenched by fiends who worked him ill,
Burned on affection's altar-stone,
And forth, around from posture hushed,
To find the missing ones he rushed.

---

* Elk in the Seneca dialect. This legend illustrates the Iroquois belief in reference to the "*Evil Eye.*" For the original I am under obligations to the late Captain Horatio Jones, United States interpreter of the Six Nations.

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Her footsteps, that had dashed aside
  The dew upon the grass, betrayed
That she had sought the river side,
  And thitherward his course he laid.
Oh! fearful in expression grew
  The visage of that man forlorn,
When answer to his shrill halloo
  Came not upon the breeze of morn.
Rough were the banks with rocks, and steep,
But down he dashed with frantic leap,
And bloody drops his vesture stained
Ere margin of the stream he gained.
Canoe and tapering oar were gone,
  And 'round he looked with startled eye.
When suddenly a doe and fawn,
  Whiter than foam-flakes, darted by:
No sound their hoofs in passing woke:
  And, wondering, the hunter stood
Until they vanished in the smoke
  Thrown upward by the tumbling flood.

Hope in his widely troubled soul
Died, giving wan despair control:
And, looking on the sun his last,
  Quoth he, in mournful tones and hollow—

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"The spirits of the dead have passed
Inviting me to follow!"
A knife he drew with haggard mien,
And, feeling that its edge was keen,
The weapon plunged—while demons laughed—
Thrice in his bosom to the haft,
Then feebly staggering to the shore—
His hunting-shirt bedabbled o'er
With life-blood red and warm—
Shrieked out—"*I come!*" with arms upheaved.
As the wild whelming waves received
His gashed and falling form;
A dirge the wind-swept forest sung,
And knell descending waters rung.

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UNDER THE GLEN IRIS FLAG.

July 4th, 1863.

THE golden fields are broad,
The shining hills are green,
And down from the eye of God
There trembles a dazzling sheen;
The sounds of woodland life,
The shout of the plunging wave,
Shut not out the strife
In which heroes find their grave,
And to-day I know the smoke
Of the battle spreads afar,
And the furrowed vales have woke
To the fiery words of war.

Ho! Flag of Liberty!
Thy stars are calmly bright:
Ho! Banner of the Free!
Enshroud me with thy light.
Up to thy folds I look,
Within thy shadow pray,

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Yet no touch unseals the book,
That foretells a grander day:
But, upheld o'er crimson fields,
Unfurled o'er rifted crag,
My heart its worship yields
To my country's Starry Flag.

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A PICTURE.

A PEACEFUL glen shut in by wooded heights;
A river rushing through its rock-cut walls;
Bright summer days and moon-illumined nights;
The sweeping solemn surge of waterfalls.

Cloud-shadows flitting over distant glades;
Trees many-hued, a hundred cool retreats;
Brooks flashing downward into white cascades;
Light evening zephyrs fresh with forest sweets.

A tree-encircled lawn above a dell;
An orchard slope, rare tufts of fragrant flowers;
A happy home where love and poesy dwell,
And joy prevails through all the changing hours.

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A SUMMER DAY.

SUMMER day, a merry party,
Flashes of wit, and laughter hearty,
Careless, happy, free from pain—
Dear hearts, will it ever be again?

Ripples of speech, then quiet thought,
Words whose echo is ne'er forgot;
A touch of hands, a passing sigh,
And then—as ever—a sad good-bye!

O friends, our lives lie far apart!
But one memory sweet holds us in heart—
'T is that of our life-song sung together,
At the beautiful Glen in beautiful weather.

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GOLDEN HOURS.

E sat on the lawn, 'neath the shade of the trees,
And read of Ulysses, far-sailing;
Of the rare lotus lands, 'mid those isles of the seas,
Whose slumberous joys were ne'er-failing;
Yet surely the odors that breathed o'er them there,
Their dream-laden pleasures bestowing,
Scarce could bring to the heart such a surcease of care
As our Glen, with enchantment o'erflowing;
For soft-murmuring waters, and odors of balm,
Delights of the eye without ceasing,
Lull our senses to rest with their magical calm,
Their pure gentle spell ne'er releasing;
And sweeter than songs sung by sirens of old,
Or sea-fairies' music delighting,
Are the voices that reach us from river and wold,
To new blissful pleasures inviting;
Yet we listen and hear in their quiet refrain
The song of the sea-fairies sung o'er again—
"Who can light on so happy a shore
All the world o'er, all the world o'er?"

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O, WHERE DO YOU COME FROM, SUNSHINE SWEET?

WHERE do you come from, sunshine sweet?
For dark is the street,—
Blessing my eyes with a swift rare gleam,
Whose light and shadow all mingled seem
Of the green of woods and the white of spray,—
Yet the day is gray!

And whence do you come, O haunting rhyme?
Unmeet for the time;
With your "Sweetest eyes" and "The Old Canoe,"
Till the good old faith again seems true—
Life is not prose, though to duties wed;
Nor the poets dead.

I am the ghost of the sunshine born
At the Glen one morn;
And I, the echo of song and rhyme
That, dying not with the dying time,
Gives life the rhythm and color of May—
Makes the day less gray.

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GLEN IRIS.

ATURE here with silent musings
Fills my inmost spirit's need,
Draws me from my self-accusings,
Nerves me on to nobler deed.

By her charm at first she won me—
Who can half her wonders tell?—
Won me by her mystic beauty,
By her soothing sylvan spell.

Golden sunsets, treasures priceless,
Perfumes from earth's altars blown,
Was there ever king or princess
Unto whom such wealth was shown?

Here hath God himself engraven
Words of peace that still our fears;
And within this circling haven
Breathes "the music of the spheres."

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O thou vale of chastened beauty,
Safe retreat from worldly care!
Where so oft inspired to duty,
I have breathed thy fragrant air;—

In thy midst, O fair Creation!
Soul entranced and fancy wild,
Here in silent meditation,
Would I seat myself, a child.

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WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

August 26th, 1875.

To J—— & K—— L——

IRIS! IRIS! beautiful one,
Open the rainbow gate;
Shining and swift the sands have run,
Never a cloud to darken the sun;
And here our travelers wait.

Iris! Iris! what have they found
At the end of the circling year?
Loving hearts more closely bound,
Loving deeds with a halo crowned,
The joy of the perfect year.

Iris! Iris! holding the keys
To the treasures of wood and glen,
Thou hast a nobler trust than these—
The charter of royal charities,
The Christ-gift unto men.

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Iris! Iris! genius of rest,
Our happy travelers greet;
The sunny South, or the blooming West,
The Eastern hills, in splendor drest,
Are not so dear and sweet.

Iris! Iris! beautiful one,
Open the rainbow gate!
Shining and swift the years have run,
So let it be in the years begun,
To end not soon—but late.

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GLEN IRIS IN WINTER.

THE Glen is hushed in winter's quiet sleep;
The summer guests to gayer scenes are gone,
And drifted snow is over all the lawn;
The river walls, near where the waters leap,
With frozen silver-spray are covered deep,
Like magic palace raised before the dawn,
Whose quaint and arabesque designs seem drawn
By phantom Moorish hand o'er all the steep
That gleams with flowers and gems, a snowy woof.
Glen Iris, we are left alone, alone,
From all the world of joy and care aloof;
We listen to the winter wind's sad moan
Among the trees—in icy armor proof—
That mourns the flowers dead and song-birds flown.

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REST.

NATURE rewards a friendly eye—
Reveals herself to sympathy,
But coldly meets the passer-by.

And he who 'd win her peerless grace,
Or scan the fairness of her face,
Must seek her in her dwelling-place.

The rifted clouds are snowy-fleeced,
The gorgeous sun ascends the east—
A fiery-vestured Orient priest.

The pine-tops glisten in his glow,
The brooks are burnished in their flow
A brightness rests on all below:—

On leaf-roofed nook and wooded ridge,
On cataract and lofty bridge,
Down to the kindly water's edge.

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Away from selfish, narrow schemes,
Where cheerful sunshine ever beams,
In hallowed rest my spirit dreams.

From human strife and wordy brawls,
I list to nature's pleasant calls,
And drink the joy of waterfalls.

A halo rests on rock and tree,
A glory flits across the lea—
God's work in beauty robed, I see.

While upward mounts the smoking spray,
Soft airs about my temples play,
And breezes kiss the heat away.

Beyond the river's graceful leap,
Where curving segments seek the deep,
The shining waters downward creep.

The sky bends o'er us crystal clear,
No tokened wraith of storm is near,
And yet God's covenant is here!

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Calm's finger resteth on the air,
Peace dwelleth on the waters there,
And rest abideth everywhere.

The earth is full of symphonies—
Leaf-rustles and the hum of bees,
And sounds like roar of distant seas.

Love's curtain shuts the past, so grim;
No future cometh dark or dim—
In present bliss the senses swim.

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THE LAST INDIAN COUNCIL ON THE GENESEE

[*Read at the Indian Council at Glen Iris, Oct.* 1, 1872.]

THE fire sinks low, the drifting smoke
Dies softly in the autumn haze,
And silent are the tongues that woke
In speech of other days.
Gone, too, the dusky ghosts whose feet
But now yon listening thicket stirred:
Unscared within its covert meet
The squirrel and the bird.

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The story of the past is told,
But thou, O Valley sweet and lone!
Glen of the Rainbow! thou shalt hold
Its romance as thine own.
Thoughts of thine ancient forest prime
Shall sometimes tinge thy summer dreams,
And shape to low poetic rhyme,
The music of thy streams.

When Indian Summer flings her cloak
Of brooding azure on the woods,
The pathos of a vanished folk
Shall haunt thy solitudes.
The blue smoke of their fires once more
Far o'er the hills shall seem to rise,
And sunset's golden clouds restore
The red man's paradise.

Strange sounds of a forgotten tongue
Shall cling to many a crag and cave,
In wash of falling waters sung,
Or murmur of the wave.
And oft in midmost hush of night,
Shrill o'er the deep-mouthed cataract's roar,
Shall ring the war-cry from the height
That woke the wilds of yore.

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Sweet Vale! more peaceful bend thy skies,
Thy airs be fraught with rarer balm:
A people's busy tumult lies
Hushed in thy sylvan calm.
Deep be thy peace! while fancy frames
Soft idyls of thy dwellers fled,—
They loved thee, called thee gentle names,
In the long summers dead.

Quenched is the fire; the drifting smoke
Has vanished in the Autumn haze;
Gone, too, O Vale, the simple folk
Who loved thee in old days.
But, for their sakes—their lives serene—
Their loves, perchance as sweet as ours—
Oh, be thy woods for aye more green,
And fairer bloom thy flowers!

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VOICES FROM THE PAST.

Read at the Indian Council held in the old Seneca Council House, at Glen Iris, October 1, 1872.

VALLEY of the Nan-do-wah-gaah!
Since thine ancient people reigned,
Lords of lowland and of highland,
Many years have waxed and waned.
Still the crystal springs of Potter
Feed thy river at its source,
But no more the Tribes are gladdened
To behold it run its course.

Lingering yet are Indian traces
Where of old their orchards grew; *
But their cabin-homes have vanished, —
Hushed the hunter's shrill halloo!
Bones of sachem, seer, and warrior,
By the plow-share are upturned,
And the white man rears his temple
Where their altar-fires once burned.

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Legends of the past are clinging
To the land they loved so well;
Grove and glade are full of phantoms,
Haunted each sequestered dell.
Silver Lake has rainbow spirits
That its waters hover o'er,
And well up in lonely places
Founts of legendary lore.

On the site of Ga-no-wa-ges†
Toiling farmers speed the plow,
And the stately groves have vanished
Where the herds are grazing now:
But the signs of Indian empire
In the region 'round are seen—
On fair hill-slopes crowned with harvest,
And the vales that laugh between.

Still the voice of Mona-sha-sha[a]
The benighted tourist hears
Where the Falls of Portage thunder,
And its roof Glen Iris rears;
And the shades of Deh-ge-wà-nus,[b]
And Hi-ok-a-too,[c] the brave,
Visit oft Gardow,[d] unfettered
By the bondage of the grave.

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Nevermore will Indian runners,
Scorning danger and fatigue,
Bear the belts that war betoken
Through the Long House of the League.
Blotted out are trails once trodden
By the Romans of the West,
From the Valley of the Hudson
To blue Erie's stormy breast.

On the hills of On-ti-o-ra
Signal-lights no longer blaze,
While the Mohawks wake from slumber,
And in wrath the hatchet raise:
And the valiant Swan-ne-ho-ont,
Guardians of the Western Door,
Will around the war-post circle,
Painted for the strife no more.

Like Dodona's oak, are vocal
Walnuts that we plant to-day,
For the call of spring released them
From their beds in precious clay:
Clay where all of Deh-ge-wà-nus
That is mortal slumbers on—
Clay that hides the moldering ashes
Of a nation's champion gone."

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Seat of power was On-on-da-ga
When the Atar-ar-hos reigned,
And the demon of destruction
At their bidding was unchained;
When the roofs of Hoch-e-la-ga[f]
By fierce foes consigned to flame,
Quelled the pride of Yon-non-di-o,[g]
And his warriors brought to shame.

Here the stream of Falling Waters,
As in proud, departed days,
Through a valley of enchantment
To the far Ontario strays.
Speeds the fiery locomotive
Where once roved the hunter-race,
And the conquering On-gweh-hon-gweh[h]
To the whites have given place.

Robbed in turn of empire wrested
From the Gah-Gwas long ago,
The wild story of their triumphs
Can oblivion never know.
It is traced on deathless pages
By the grave, historic pen,
And the tongue of gray tradition
Whispers it to hill and glen.

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Talks each rill with singing ripples
Where the troutlet loves to play —
Babble brooks that seek yon river
Of the red man passed away;
While the swift Dyo-ne-ga-nooh[i]
Weds O-at-ka's[j] darkening tide,
Will melodious names he gave them
To his story be allied.

By descendants, weak and wasted,
Is the loss of empire felt
In the realm of Ga-no-no-o,[k]
Where their conquering fathers dwelt.
Here and there the scattered children
Of the fallen woods abide
Where the winding Ta-no-wan-deh[l]
And the Cattaraugus[m] glide.

Mighty chief, Sa-go-ye-wat-ha![n]
Mute is now thy silvery tongue,
But grand echoes of its music
Linger where thine accents rung;
And within this House of Council,
Saved from silence and decay,
Forest kings, in spirit present,
Walk unseen perchance to-day.

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Lo! this sacred relic rescued
From dread mildew and the mold,
Council House of Ga-o-ya-de-o,*
Where the great convened of old!
Once more from a spark long smothered
On this hearth their fires up-pour:
Na-wen-ni-yuh,† may their memory
Perish from us nevermore!

The following notes are kindly furnished by O. H. Marshall, Esq., author of "Expedition of De Nonville," "Niagara Frontier," &c., and by W. C. Bryant, Esq., President of the Buffalo Historical Society:

(*) The early pioneers found flourishing orchards scattered through the Genesee country. The seeds were probably furnished to the Indians by the Jesuit missionaries; only the sour crab-apple, now quite common in the woods, is indigenous to the United States.

(†) The village was named from the sulphur springs of Avon.

(*a*) Name of a young Seneca squaw, who, according to an Indian tradition, committed suicide through jealousy, by going over the Portage Falls in her canoe,

(*b*) The Indian name of the White Woman, signifying, as translated by W. C. Bryant, Esq., "the two wailing voices."

(*c*) Hi-ok-a-too was the second husband of Deh-ge-wà-nus.

(*d*) The home of Deh-ge-wà-nus, a few miles below Portage Falls, on the Genesee River. In Seneca orthography "Gan-da-oh," but commonly written "Gardow."

(*e*) On this occasion several young walnut trees, the seeds of which grew on a tree standing by the grave of Deh-ge-wà-nus, were planted about the Council House by the descendants of Deh-ge-wà-nus, Red Jacket, Sir William Johnson, and Captain Brant

(*ee*) The White Woman and Red Jacket were at first buried almost side by side, in the Mission Burying Ground near Buffalo. Subsequently, however, the remains of Red Jacket were removed to the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, and, since the holding of the Indian Council on October 1, 1872, those of the White Woman to the Indian Council House Grounds on the Genesee River.

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(*f*) Indian name of Montreal.

(*g*) Iroquois name of the Governor of Montreal, written by the French, *On-on-ti-o*, and signifying "big mountain," after Montmagny, one of the early French Governors of Canada.

(*h*) "On-gweh-hon-gweh" signifies "real men," or emphatically *men*.

(*i*) "Dyo-ne-ga-nooh" signifies "cold water," and is the Indian name of Caledonia Springs.

(*j*) "O-at-ka" is the Seneca name for Allen's Creek.

(*k*) "Ga-no-no-o" is the Seneca name for the State of New York.

(*l*) "Ta-no-wan-deh" signifies "swift water."

(*m*) "Cattaraugus," the Indian name is "Gah-daa-gas."

(*n*) "Sa-go-ye-wat-ha," the Seneca name of Red Jacket, signifying "he keeps them awake."

(*o*) "Ga-o-ya-de-o," the uppermost Seneca village on the Genesee River, commonly called Caneadea. From this rendezvous Indian war parties sallied forth southward and eastward into Pennsylvania, and to it returned, bringing their spoils and captives. Here was located the ancient Council-House, which was subsequently removed to Glen Iris. The gauntlet ground lay opposite its western door, and the building was the goal of safety for numerous white captives, who, from time to time, had been subjected to the trying ordeal of running the double line of savage foes, among whom was the brave Major Moses Van Campen, of border fame.

(*p*) Name by which the Christian's God is represented by the missionaries.

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CHRISTENING OF MONA-SHA-SHA, THE BIRCHEN CANOE.

WILD bird of the water, float out to the foam,
The waves hold a welcoming, speed to thy home!
Thou 'rt christened in sunshine, and christened in mist,
Whose wreathings of incense these hill-tops have kissed.
Laugh on, "Laughing Water," we 're bringing to you
A friend thou 'st forgotten—a birchen canoe.

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LINES FOUND ON A RUSTIC SEAT AT GLEN IRIS.

UT into the woody stillness,
In the winter time he went;
Faced the misty cascade's chillness,—
Faced the sky where rainbows bent,—
Faced the promise of the summer,
Where the folded blossoms hide;—
Turned him from the hollow murmur
Of the city's sullen tide,—
Turned him from the friends who loved him
Better far than he might know;—
Closed his ears to human voices,—
Heard alone the river's flow,—
Heard the solemn chant of cedars,—
Heard the song of winter birds,
For he loved their carols better
Than the tones of loving words.
But he shall not dwell untended
In the solitude he sought;
He shall hear with wild winds blended
Haunting voices, haunting thought;

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Phantom lips shall touch his forehead
When he dreams beneath the trees;
Haunting tones from out the mosses
Whisper with their tongued leaves.
He shall see a steady smiling
In the arch above his head,
And will ofttimes look for sunshine,
But a face gleam in its stead.
And when summer twilight deepens,
And sweet odors softly flow,
He shall feel another presence
Like the perfume come and go.
But he 'll hear no fall of footsteps
In the silence he loves best,
For the phantom friend beside him
Would not break his chosen rest.
He shall think 'tis nature loves him,
In the rain shall see no tears,
See no barren desert stretching
O'er the phantom's coming years.
And if sorrow falls about him,
Like a spirit 't will be there,
And he 'll know not of its soothing,
But the skies shall seem more fair.

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THE HAPPY VALLEY.

THE shady woods of Wyoming are pleasant as of old,
The distant fields of Livingston are clothed in green and gold,
The orchard fruit is hanging low on many a burdened tree,
And through its rock-bound battlements flows down the Genesee;
While above the roar of waters, and beneath the summer skies,
In all its peerless beauty there the happy valley lies!

White clouds of incense slowly rise above the sparkling fall,
The lovely Iris o'er it rests—a gorgeous coronal;
And no sound of weary clamor, of workshop or of forge.
Breaks the murmur of the wild cascade that flashes down the gorge;
O, our hearts forget their sorrows, as we feast our eager eyes
Where below in all its beauty there the happy valley lies!

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The calmness of the lotus-land is round us everywhere,
There 's music in the waterfall, there 's gladness in the air;
We sit beneath the shadows now, and watch the drowsy mill,
Or hark the wild kingfisher's cry, the crow's caw on the hill;
There the beach and stately fir-tree in crowning glory rise,
And below in peerless beauty still the happy valley lies!

O, fairest of all rivers, how often to our thought,
In the city's heated tumult, hast thou refreshing brought;
Beyond the storied waters—the Avon and the Rhine—
While our hearts have leaped exultingly, as thrilled by olden wine;
Again we view thy age-worn cliffs, rich with the sunset-dyes,
And still in peerless beauty there the happy valley lies!

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Ye woods and fields, be ever green and beautiful as now;
Bend o'er the deep in loveliness, thou many-tinted bow;
Flow on, fair river, in thy course, and carry joy abroad;
Sweet valley, from thy bosom send thanksgivings up to God;
Look down in loving-kindness still, ye clear, benignant skies,
And angels guard the sacred spot where dear Glen Iris lies!

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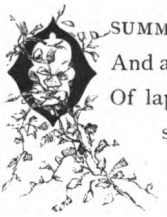
ONE DAY.

[*Extract from a Nameless Anniversary Poem.*]



SUMMER! goddess of the whispering woods,
And airs that breathe but peace, and solitudes
Of lapsing meadow-vistas, braided o'er with streams;
Queen of wild forest tracts
And thundering cataracts,
Whose locks are lustrous with a myriad rainbow beams;

O, Summer past! upon thy peaceful breast
One day, a jewel brighter than the rest,
Shines on me now with all the glory of its skies!
Blue skies that brood above
A river-clefted vale, where love,
Incarnate in the mists, reigns ever, and ne'er dies!

Glen of the Rainbow! valley of the blest,
Benedicite, vale! may sweet calm and rest
Enfold thee like an endless twilight — stream and shore—
Hush all thy dells in sleep,
Thy fields and woods, and keep
Thee lulled within their soft embrace for evermore!

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SAPPHICS.

LESSINGS on his head who from love and pity
Snatched from clownish fingers the precious canvas,
Spying there a draught by a wise old Master,
Oldest and wisest;

Snatched it from rude hands that had frayed and smirched it,
Pored upon it long, till he caught the secret,
Caught the whole design of the mighty Artist,
Tender and fearful;

Then, with subtile touch and instinctive color,
Toiled to body forth all the wondrous purport,
Pondered year by year, as he wrought upon it,
Lovingly patient.

Blessings on his heart! we who gaze upon it
Feel the world's hard pack melting off our shoulders,
Feel a mystic palm reaching from the picture,
Soothing and blessing.

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Every mortal mood here is fed to fullness;
While by lawn and fountain a gracious presence,
Hospitable, moves like a breeze or sunbeam,—
Fondles and flatters.

Love, too, has his haunt in the brake of sumac,
Sallies thence, 't is said, when the moon is mounting,
Flings a web of spells over porch and bower,
Fateful for lovers.

Friendship, too, blows here, as in Babylonian
Meadows blows the flower that, 'twixt eve and sunrise,
Paints a hundred leagues with the sudden glory,
Crimson or purple.

Ah! give me to sit, with a friend beside me,
While the twilight-hills fling their cloaks about us,
And the pulse of Time, through the sleeping spaces,
Beats like a child's heart;

While the River forges his thousand thunders,
While the plumes of spray wheeling down the cañon,
Flitting through the haze of the starry shimmer,
Flash back and vanish.

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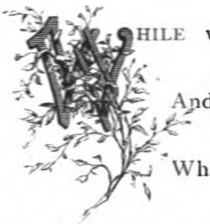
"THE NAMELESS" AT GLEN IRIS

[*Extract from "Nameless" Anniversary Poem.*]



HILE we the Year's chrysalides unlace,
And all their silken threads around us creep,
What living memories start from shrouded sleep!
Upon whose broad, gold-dusted wings we trace
The penciled curves of many a pictured scene,—
Sun-copied hills, the river's rippling sheen,
And the soft hues of many a shadowy place.

For when the days were in their rosiest bloom
We shook away the dust of city marts;
And with a happy sense of lightened hearts,
Let fall awhile our heavy weights of gloom.
Right princely was our welcome to the wood,
The green-roofed paths, the valley and the flood,
And to the generous board and tasteful room!

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The moon came up that eve, full-orbed and fair—
That sovereign Cleopatra,—ruling Night,
And dropping ever in his loving sight
Her threaded pearls adown the wine-like air:
Half undissolved they sank through shadows gray,
Embroidered Mo-no-sha-sha's robe of spray,
And caught in Deh-ga-ya-soh's silver snare.

All night we heard the river-cataracts pour:
Their ceaseless timbrels smote the ear of sleep,
Till all our dreams, like waves that landward sweep,
Were wild and voluble with naiad-lore:
And we were reft of rest, and seemed to be
Kuhleborns and Undines, dripping with the sea,
Or knights and ladies drenched upon the shore.

Surely the water-witches tricked us well!
When the carved cuckoo made the morning hours
Finish their rounds with song, 'mid falling showers,
And rain-weighed rose-vines; scarcely might we tell
Whether we had not lost our souls in dreams
Of that past night, and were but sprites of streams,
Oreads of hills, or elfs of knoll and dell.

Upon the grass-fringed lakelet, fountain-fed
With cooling rills, just drained from hill-side wells,

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Where, to the tinkle of sweet water-bells,
Aërial jets were waltzing overhead,
By sirens lured, how daintily we rode!
Till, drawn too near their crystalline abode,
What showers the fickle creatures o'er us shed!

We trod the dim cool windings of the trail
That through the forest led to sacred nooks,
Where lightly laughed the ever-raptured brooks,
And the mitchella repens blossomed, pale
From love of shade and rich excess of dew;
Where pulsed the bubbling spring, and downward threw,
From tiny heights, its moss-entangled veil.

We sauntered by the still, sequestered lake,
O'er which the trees leaned low and disallowed
Reflection of blue sky or tinted cloud:
Hushed were we into silence, or but spake
Half to recite, half chant some rhymed phrase:
(Ah! such the witchery of those woodland ways,
The very lovers there their loves forsake!)

But thou, O Genesee! above thy tide
On grassy lawn we loitered in the shade,

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And watched thy cascade-waves their net-work braid
Of sunny coils, the notched, rude rocks to hide;
And heard—as choir-sung hymns, past architrave
And frescoed arch, and pillar-narrowed nave—
Ever, O Genesee, thy songs of pride!

Vaunting, thou child of clouds, thy lineage high:
Thine ermine-bordered, rustling, gemmed attire;
Thy rainbow-wrought pavilion, fringed with fire
Of ardent suns when reigns the proud July;
Thy creeping, leaping, battling waterfalls;
Thine ancient, steadfast, most imperial halls,
Whose lofty chambers swell thy lightest sigh.

O home of peace! O cedar-bowered land—
Glistening Glen Iris, beautiful as heaven!
O cloven hills, by flood or earthquake riven!
O riotous stream, impetuous and grand!
There while we dwelt, gay laugh and mimic feud
Our youth revived, our childhood half renewed,
And knit, forever one, our songful band.

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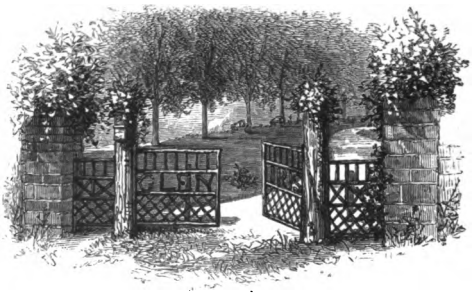

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